

**DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROGRAMS**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**STATE TACKLES PROBLEM GAMBLING**  
***Problem Gambling Awareness Week is March 6-12***

SACRAMENTO – More than a million people in California have a gambling problem, with the ripple effects permeating through families, friendships and work relationships. To spotlight the prevalence of this chronic disease in our state, the California Office of Problem Gambling, as part of the national observance of *Problem Gambling Awareness Week*, is hosting a two-day training summit featuring nationally recognized experts from the fields of gambling addiction, treatment and research.

“Problem gambling not only takes a financial toll on individuals and families, it also affects the mental, emotional and physical aspects of life,” said OPG Deputy Director Terri Sue Canale.

Non-traditional treatment for problem gamblers will be the focus of the first day of the summit, being held March 7-8 at the Radisson Hotel Sacramento. Representatives from Beit T’Shuvah, a residential treatment center that uses unique therapeutic approaches such as music and surfing to treat addictions, will present an interactive demonstration that will emphasize problem gambling treatment skills. OPG’s recently implemented Problem Gambling Telephone Intervention Program that offers over-the-phone counseling on its 24-hour toll-free crisis helpline will also be a topic of discussion.

The second day of the summit offers training for providers of problem gambling treatment services. Topics include how to develop culturally relevant approaches to outreach; structuring treatment for problem gamblers, including youth and families; and how prior traumatic experiences affect women dealing with problem gambling.

A coalition of state agencies and associations have joined forces to promote Problem Gambling Awareness Week, including OPG, a division of the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs; the Department of Justice’s Bureau of Gambling Control; California Gambling Control Commission; California State Lottery; California Gaming Association; California Tribal Business Alliance; UCLA Gambling Studies Program; and the California Council on Problem Gambling.

The Problem Gambling Training Summit is financed with funds from the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund. For more information on the summit or to register, call the OPG office at (916)327-8611. Registration is free for problem gambling treatment providers and media.

**About OPG:** ADP’s Office of Problem Gambling is responsible for developing prevention and treatment programs to reduce the prevalence of problem and pathological gambling in the state. Help is available for gamblers by calling the hotline 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537) and on the Internet at <http://www.problemgambling.ca.gov>.

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